EDUCATION CONNECTION



Addressing educational issues that affect military children in Navy Region Mid-Atlantic



Issue 2, April/May 2010

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Celebrating The Month Of The Military Child

by: Marian Leverette, M.A.T, M.A.Ed. Mid-Atlantic Regional School Liaison Officer

April not only brings showers for May flowers but it is also brings the month designated to celebrate military children. For well over ten years April has been set aside as the Month of the Military child. The Month of the Military Child offers the opportunity to focus on military children and honor their sacrifice.



Many of our Installations, local schools and other organizations throughout the military community will sponsor activities and events for Service members' children. Check with your local Youth Center, MWR activities, Fleet and Family Support Center, Family Readiness Group, or Armed services YMCA to find out what's happening in your community to celebrate the Military Child.

This is the time to plan something exciting to show you care. Throughout the month, numerous local schools, military commands and youth and teen centers will plan special events to honor military children. These events will stress the importance of providing children with quality services and support to help them succeed in the mobile military lifestyle. These special activities include arts and crafts shows, picnics, carnivals, fairs, parades, block parties and other special activities, focusing on military children that highlight the unique contributions they make.

Our military children face many obstacles unique to their situation, such as having a parent deployed for extended periods of time and moving frequently. Deployments and family separations can be stressful times for children. For the adults who work with military children your local school liaison officer can provide you with information and resources to support your efforts. Additionally, the school

liaison officers can assist you with professional development for your local school staff on the various stages of deployment and ways that children are affected.

Throughout the month, the school liaison officers in the Mid-Atlantic region encourage schools to plan special events to honor military children and have administrators and principals incorporate the theme of this month into their every day duties and responsibilities. These efforts will stress the importance of providing children with quality services and support to help them succeed in the mobile military lifestyle.

If you are not near a military installation but want ideas for activities to help celebrate our military children, visit the following websites:

- Military HOMEFRONT's Healthy Parenting Initiative http://www.militaryhomefront.dod.mil
- Military Child Education Coalition http://www.militarychild.org/
- Our Military Kids http://www.ourmilitarykids.org/
- Military Youth on the Move http://apps.mhf.dod.mil/pls/psgprod/f?p=MYOM:HOME:3268948407514751

April has been the "Month of the Military Child" since it began in 1986, a legacy left by former Defense Secretary Caspar Weinberger. Since then the Department of Defense (DOD) has teamed with various partners to recognize the sacrifices and applaud the courage of military children. More than almost 2 million American children under the age of 18 have at least one parent serving in the military. What better way to show you care and are grateful for the sacrifices of others by celebrating the littlest troops this country has, our military children.

School Liaison Officer Highlight



Featured SLO: Patricia Gajan, M.Ed.,

Joint Expeditionary Base Little Creek-Fort Story, Virginia Beach, VA

Patricia Gajan has been a member of the Child and Youth Programs team as a School Liaison officer since June 2009. In a recent interview she shared a few words about herself so that our readers can get to know her better.

What professional positions have you held prior to joining JEBLCFS as the School Liaison Officer?

I have been a teacher of students grades 2-8 and a central office administrator for a school system.

How do you think your prior experiences have prepared you for this position as School Liaison Officer?

I have been a Navy wife. My husband was active duty, surface warfare, for 20 years. In that time we raised four children, survived more than ten extended deployments, and quite a few moves to new duty stations. In my professional life, the positions I have held in education have given me the knowledge and experience in how to assist children with their needs and how school systems function. I have also had experience working with No Child Left Behind and federal educational rules and regulations.

What do you hope to accomplish as the JEBLCFS School Liaison Officer?

It is important to work as an advocate for Navy families to ensure that transitions to a new duty station, new schools, and a new geographical area can be a positive experience. It is equally important to work as an advocate for those families dealing with deployment issues due to the mobility of our armed forces. Transitions and deployments can create educational concerns for our military families. It is imperative that they have a resource that can assist them to find a resolution to the problems or obstacles that the military families face on a continual basis because of their willingness to serve our country.

It is also important to be a conduit of information between the commanding officer and the school system in order to keep both parties aware of educational and military issues that have an affect on the families for which they provide needed services.

It is important to have the opportunity to inform teachers, guidance counselors, and administrators in the local area school system about the military lifestyle and its immense impact on students and their academic performance. This leads to a better understanding of the unique issues that military families cope with especially during transitions and deployments.

What is something that not too many people may know about you that you would like to share today?

I believe in our children. Children are our country's most important and most wonderful asset. We need to work together to ensure their safety, their happiness, and that they receive a strong education in order to achieve success.

Biography: Patricia K. Gajan is the School Liaison Officer for Joint Expeditionary Base Little Creek-Fort Story, Virginia Beach, VA. She has a Master of Education (M.Ed) in Educational Leadership, a Bachelor of Arts degree, and is a certified administrator (PreK-12) and teacher (Early Education NK-4, Middle Education 4-8). Patricia has been working in education for 19 years. She has experience as a resource teacher, a classroom teacher, and as an administrator. Patricia experienced being a Navy wife for twenty years and raised four children.

"I am proud that my mommy and daddy both serve in the United States Navy"

Kiarra, Grade Three, Shirley Leham Elementary School, Military Child Education Coalition Anthology book, page 29

I was born in Italy, and now live in Japan

I have friends that are black, white, yellow and tan.

I am able to try lots of new food,

Like mahi-mahi and sushi and they're really good.

My favorite things to do are visit Sea Paradise and the Imperial Palace

There is never a dull moment or time to be callous. At Shirley Lanham elementary School I learn about our host nation

And the art of making origami.

I also got to help raise money and make donations to the victims of the disastrous tsunami.

My most memorable vacation spot was Singapore; I got to see pink dolphins

First hand; and lay out on the beach and relax in the sand.

I miss daddy when he goes on the ship,

But I know he'll return soon ready for my next Girl Scout trip.

I am only eight years old, but here to say.

I wouldn't have it any other way.

My sister and I are proud to be called military brats and live abroad,

I'd like the whole world to stand up for the US Military and applaud.

Web Resources of the Month

Online Tutoring Now Available for tutor.com **Navy Families**



Navy service members and their families now have free, unlimited access to online tutoring from Tutor.com through a program provided by the Department of Defense. Navy members and their dependents around the world can work with a certified, professional tutor online 24/7 to get help with homework, studying, test prep and more. Tutor.com offers help in more than 16 subjects from elementary math to physics.

For more information including a video to see how Tutor.com works, visit www.tutor.com/navy or call 800-411-1970.

Military OneSource: A Great Resource for **Military Families**



Education, relocation, parenting, child care, stress- you name it- Military OneSource is here to help you with just about any need.

Available by phone or online, a free service is provided by the Department of Defense for Active Duty, Guard and Reserve service members (regardless of activation status) and their families. The service is completely private and confidential. with few exceptions.

Military One Source is available 24 hours a day, seven days a week, 365 days a year at 1-800-342-9647 or www.MilitaryOneSource.com.

Resources for Educators

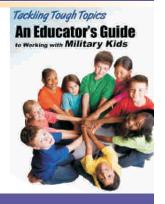
Tackling Tough Topics: An Educators Guide to Working with Military Kids

By Mona M. Johnson, Director, Learning and Teaching Support, Washington State Office of Superintendent of Public Instruction

This publication was created to assist you in better understanding and being responsive to the unique issues facing military kids whose parents or loved ones have been or are currently deployed. It provides practical, hands-on information to help you deal with the unique "tough to talk about" topics students experience in the school setting including: Talking to Kids About Violence, Terrorism, and War, Supporting Military Kids During Deployment, Homecoming and Reunion, Helping Kids Cope with Stress, Understanding the Impact of Grief and Loss, Coping with Death, Fostering Resilience



https://www.operationmilitarykids.org/resources/ToughTopics%20BookletFINAL.pdf



Professional Development Opportunity

Transition Counselor Institute ™ Phase I

TRAINING FOR ALL WHO WORK WITH MILITARY CHILDREN!!

Please join the Navy Region Mid-Atlantic School Liaison Officers as we host the Military Child Education Coalition's Transition Counselor Institute[™] (TCI[™]). This two-day professional development opportunity is the first in a series of three interactive professional institutes focusing on the military-connected child's experience with transitions.

TCI™ Phase 1 strives to create an environment for education, installation and community professionals to have access to professional networks, technologies, resources and support systems to help them stay abreast of the dynamic and diverse K-12 school experience that impacts the transitioning student. Military lifestyle and culture, school transition perspectives, identifying local transition challenges, and supporting children through trauma and loss are some of the modules addressed. The cost is FREE to all participants.

Host Base	Dates	Time	Location
NS Norfolk/NSA	April 21-22	8 a.m. to 4 p.m.	The Founders Inn and Spa
PNSY (Kittery, ME)	April 26-27	8 a.m. to 4 p.m.	Nonantum Resort
Naval Subase NLÓN	April 29-30	8 a.m. to 4 p.m.	Groton Inn & Suites
NAS Oceana	May 3 - 4	8 a.m. to 4 p.m.	The Founders Inn and Spa
JEB West (Little Creek)	May 5 - 6	8 a.m. to 4 p.m.	The Founders Inn and Spa

For additional information please contact your local school liaison officer. Pre-Registration is required for all attendees. Please register online: https://gmhost1.gomembers.com/clients/t-mcec/etrakwebapp/meetings.aspx

Parent Involvement Counts!

Parenting Tips on Bullying

Submitted by: Vernell B. Kilpatrick, School Liaison Officer, Joint Expeditionary Base Little Creek-Fort Story, JEB West

each developmental stage. Bullying is often different at each stage and different for boys and girls. Help them understand that bullying is an aggressive act where the intention, rather than accidental, is purposeful. It is used to gain control through verbal or physical aggression over children who are younger, smaller, or less able to defend themselves. Generally, the one who bullies lack self-esteem, has problems with anger control, and may have difficulty with close peer

It is important for parents to talk openly about bullying with their children through

relationships. When they bully they have an illusion of power and control. Children who are bullied are usually less able to protect themselves or have poorly developed problem-solving skills in that they might not understand the many options available to them.

Bullying with younger children is generally name calling or physical such as pushing or grabbing items away. In junior high school, bullying becomes more verbal with harassment and exclusion from peer groups or friendships in ways that belittle a child. Sometimes the child bullying is admired for their mean-spiritedness. Bullying decreases in high school, however, when it occurs it can be more severe or hurtful. Cyber bullying is increasingly a problem as children become more apt to

use the Internet through emails, instant messaging, blogs, or programs like Face Book.

So, what's a parent to do? First of all, plan to have periodic discussions with your child. Discuss issues around respect, empathy, and fairness especially whenever your child mentions being bullied or watching someone bully, or speaks in very disrespectful ways about other children. When possible, involve siblings and ask the older ones to talk about what they know. Help them understand that bullying is an abuse of power and that it relies on an imbalance of power in a relationship. It is not one of respect, empathy or fairness. Help them identify progressive stages or alternative paths such as 1) ignore the action, 2) walk or move away, 3) ask the child to stop, 4) using one's voice tone more firmly to stop or 5) stay with groups of friends. All of these are likely to deter bullying behavior. Lastly, when bullying is more severe and more hurtful or nothing is working, encourage your child to tell you and other adults. Explain the difference between tattle-telling and holding a child responsible for wrong action. With school age children, you can play act different scenarios. With older children you can use imagination scenarios around when it is best to handle by oneself or with peers or when it is better to talk with adults. Monitor your child's activities on the Internet and be clear about rules and consequences for misuse of the Internet.

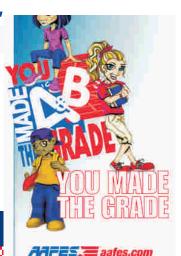
Find out what your child's school policy is on bullying. Use this to reinforce respectful behaviors. You might also want to join with other parents to help reinforce social norms that frown on bullying. Most important, however, is the development of good self-esteem because this is the best defense against the creation of bullying behaviors and acceptance that bullying is okay.

For more information on Bullying and it's affect on children and teens, please utilize the services of your installation's School Liaison Officer (SLO) or the Military Family Life Consultant (MFLC) assigned to your Child and Youth Programs.

You Made the Grade Program

Parents did you know...

Initiated in February 2000, the "You Made the Grade" Program is designed to reward students in grades 1 through 12 for above-average academic achievement and to inspire them to work that much harder. Qualifying students can receive a booklet with various discount coupons on variety of items. To get the booklet, students must present a valid military ID card and proof of an overall "B" or better average to their local BX or PX. The overall objective of this program is to provide an incentive for kids to not only stay in school, but to excel in school.









SUPPORT FOR CHILDREN WITH SPECIAL EDUCATION NEEDS

EASING THE TRANSITION FOR SPECIAL NEEDS CHILDREN BY; Janet K. McCarthy M.Ed., NAVSTA NEWPORT SLO

For families of EFMP children there is an added element of concern during transition to a new location. Because of differing Special Education Laws in each state and the complication that are often associated with adjusting to a new environment for many EFMP children, transition can be a stressful time. To minimize the stress it is especially important that families become familiar with the services available at their new school while being particularly organized in putting together the necessary documents from the sending school. Paving the way for a smooth transition can make a difficult situation become a positive experience. Here are some tips for easing the transition with a special needs child.

- 1. Keep an open mind! Programs and services may be different at the new school.
- 2. Communicate with your child's special education director and ask for assistance as to what should be done before the transition to the new school. Communicate with the special education director at the district you are moving to and request local policies.
- 3. Contact the School Liaison Officer and the Exceptional Family Member (EFMP) Program at your new installation. They will assist you in identifying resources at your new duty station.
- 4. After informing the current school of the pending move, get complete copies of educational and health records, including IEP, evaluations, diagnoses, shots and other pertinent information.
- 5. Make sure that your child's IEP is active at the time of transfer.
- 6. To facilitate the scheduling and assignment process for the new school, ask that they accept your child's IEP in advance for review.
- 7. Along with the name, phone number, and e-mail address of the teacher who knows your child best, gets a list by subject of textbooks and instructional resources that your child is currently using.
- 8. Make sure you have the correct address, phone numbers, website, fax number and contact information for your sending school.
- 9. Send school records to the new school and set up a meeting time prior to arrival. On arrival, make an appointment to introduce your child.
- 10. Be sure to take any special equipment and refill medication prescriptions that your child may need for the next few months.

SOME OF THESE TIPS ARE TAKEN FROM STOMP (Specialized Training for Military Parents)

TEEN LEADERSHIP CAMPS

Operation Purple[®] Leadership Camps are a program of the National Military Family Association. These camps are geared toward military children ages 15-17 who have shown an ability and willingness to lead and mentor in their respective military and civilian communities.

Our Leadership Camps strive to create strong teen leaders by giving them the tools needed to develop self-confidence and the opportunity to test their strengths and abilities.

Each camp provides a unique environment for teens to receive leadership experience in the outdoors. Please refer to our complete list of <u>camp locations</u>, our program <u>FAQs</u>, <u>eligibility requirements</u>, and our required <u>Community Service Project</u> to see if this camp experience is for you.

All expenses for 2010 Operation Purple Leadership Camp, including travel expenses up to \$500.00 with itinerary and receipt via a reimbursement process, will be covered for teens selected to participate in the program. Financial assistance may be considered on a case-by-case basis.

For detailed information about all aspects of this program and application process, click the individual links below. http://www.militaryfamily.org/our-programs/operation-purple/teen-leadership-camps/



Grade-level Curriculum Resources

Elementary Corner

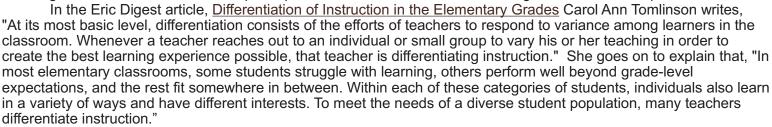
Grade Level Issues (K-5) in Public Schools Differentiation of Instruction in Elementary Education:

Teaching the Way Your Child Learns

Eric Digest: ... if teachers want to maximize their students' individual potential, they will have to attend to the differences.

Many times, there are educational concepts that parents are unfamiliar with, simply because we are not a part of the profession. Differentiation in Instruction is an example of one of those concepts that most of us have been unaware of. Nothing affects our children's educational development more

directly than the methodology employed in their instruction. In elementary education especially, we believe that teaching methods have a dramatic impact upon our children's immediate and long term academic experience.



We urge parents of elementary age children to familiarize themselves with the concept of Differentiation in Instruction, and to explore the teaching methods that are applied in your child's classrooms, especially with children that are having difficulties with primary learning curriculums. Observe your child to see if you can determine whether or not they seem to grasp materials better verbally, visually, interactively, etc., and finally, share those observation and concerns with your child's teacher. Ask how material is generally presented to the class and by all means, drop in on your child during the school day to get a first hand view of the teacher's level of interaction with the students. For more information on Differentiation in Instruction, see Eric Digest: Differentiation of Instruction in the Elementary Grades.

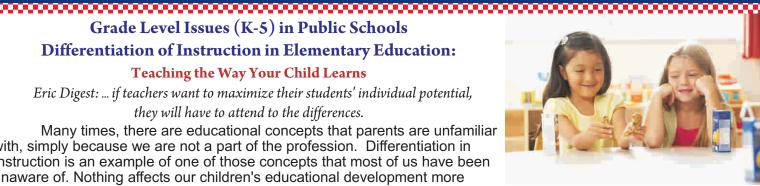
First Grade: Ready or Not?

The National Association of Elementary School Principals has recommended standards for primary grades which are very similar to those outlined by the National Association for the **Education of Young Children. The similar** recommendations include:

- Schools should be ready for the child and not expect the child to be ready for the school. Early childhood programs must be based on the ways children learn, not on how adults prefer to teach.
- Since young children learn best through their senses by doing, learning should be the outcome of hands-on experience, especially play.
- Children should be assigned to classes as close to the research-based recommended class sizes as possible: ratios of 2 adults: 20 children for 3- to 5year-olds and 2 adults: 24 children for 6- to 8-year-
- Children should be assessed by observation, not tested for success or failure. Letter grades should not be used.
- Children will learn more quickly if they have actively experienced the process of learning -- in other words. if they have been read to, have acted out what they have learned, have touched the objects described, have seen some of the places or people described, and so forth.

Think about the following questions and how your child is progressing. Remember, no child should be expected to accomplish all of these items perfectly before first grade. Can your child:

- Be away from you all day without being upset?
- Pay attention to a short story when it is read and answer questions about it?
- Create things with paper, colors, scissors, markers and glue? (It is not important to stay in the lines!)
- Tie a knot, bow or scarf?
- Repeat simple messages?
- Remember instructions and carry out two or three tasks after being told once?
- Put a simple puzzle together?
- Draw a picture of a person which includes the head. body, arms and legs?
- Draw or copy shapes?
- Visit comfortably with people outside the family?
- Tell his/her phone number, address, birthday?
- Identify several colors?
- Try to write or copy letters and numbers?
- Admit he/she doesn't know or needs help?



Secondary Corner

Education and Parental Involvement in Secondary Schools: Problems & Solutions

The concept of parental involvement with the student and the school is a vital one and can produce great rewards, however when students start middle school and high school parental involvement really isn't as great as it was in elementary school.

Parental involvement is a combination of commitment and active participation on the part of the parent to the school and to the student. There are many problems concerned with involvement. Many secondary schools simply do not know how to deal with the nontraditional family and the areas of concern that it represents. Often times our military families who undergo numerous deployments and parent separation will have communication concerns with their child's teachers. Schools find it hard to communicate with the parents on a regular bases when the parents are active duty. The number of solutions that can be used to improve parental involvement are substantial. When these solutions are implemented the effects are great, especially for the student. Improved student achievement is the key objective. "Parental involvement, in almost any form, produces measurable gains in student achievement"

"Schools must understand that lack of participation by parents does not necessarily mean they are not interested in their child academic success or neglecting their responsibilities. They simply may not have the time, resources, or know-how to help out"

Solutions...

There are many things that can be done to improve parental involvement at the secondary level, but the success of any program will be tied directly to the support and encouragement of the principal. When the school is more aware of the circumstances of our military families, better communications can be established.

More communication between the school and home are needed, but specific types of communication are important.

Two-way informal exchanges between teacher/parent are much more effective than one-way communication from the teacher Also, friendly contact should be established with parents early in the year before something has happened that makes it necessary for the teacher to contact the parent.

Parents who attend parent/teacher meetings are able to get to know their child's teachers better. Another avenue sometimes overlooked parents as volunteers. By doing this, the school is letting parents know that they are wanted, needed, and welcomed at the school. Many parents can be an excellent source of sharing their knowledge of occupations, foreign travel, special skills and hobbies.

Post Secondary Corner

News about In-State Tuition Rates

For periods of enrollment that begin after July 1, 2009, members of the armed forces (Army, Navy, Air Force, Marine Corps, and Coast Guard) on active duty for a period of more than 30 days and his or her spouse, or his or her dependent children will be eligible to receive in-state tuition at public colleges and universities in the state where they reside or are permanently stationed. Once a Service member or their family members are enrolled and paying in-state tuition, they will continue to pay the in-state tuition rate as long as they remain continuously enrolled at the institution even if the Service member is reassigned outside the state.



Child and Youth Programs

Advice Corner

ASK SHARON!

The following are questions that many service families often ask. Sharon Black our school liaison officer for Norfolk Naval Shipyard and Portsmouth Naval Medical Centers takes time out to answer parent questions so that all can benefit and be informed.

1. We are scheduled to transfer to a new base this summer. How do we locate the best school for our children?

I would recommend beginning your search by contacting the Installation School Liaison Officer at your previous duty station. They will provide you with departure

information and put you in touch with the School Liaison Officer at your new duty station. Also if you are moving to the Hampton Roads area you can visit www.militaryk12link.com www.doe.virginia.gov to find information on school contacts, academic calendars, state testing guidelines, transitioning and much more for local schools near your selected military community. More resources for all areas are available through the Military HOMEFRONT Web site at http://www.militaryhomefront.dod.mil/.

2. My daughter's birthday is after the required Sept 30 qualification date for kindergarten in Virginia. She is qualified in our home state and I don't want her to fall behind when we go back home. What can I do?

Each state sets its own age requirements for Pre-Kindergarten, Kindergarten, and Grade 1 enrollment. It can be very frustrating to learn that even a one-day difference can mean your child will not qualify to attend a public school, but it is the state law and school policy. However, according to Article IV of the Interstate Compact on Educational Opportunity for Military Children, if your child has already started kindergarten or 1st grade in an accredited school in the sending or previous state he/she can continue in the same grade in the receiving or new state regardless of the entrance age requirements.

The current state age requirements for enrollment in Kindergarten and Grade 1 for all 50 states, the District of Columbia and Department of Defense schools can also be found in the MCEC publication, Getting Your Ducklings in a Row, available through the MCEC website, www.militarychild.org.

3. Since my child was about 3 months old, I have noticed that her developmental skills seem to be further ahead than other children her age. She is now ready to start school, what can I do as a parent to help my child intellectually?

The number one thing that parents have to remember is that every child is different. Some children learn quickly and others may take a little longer. Either way, parents can start by making sure their child/children:

- are physically healthy by providing nutritional foods daily, making sure that children get their regular medical check-up and at least 10 are more hours of sleep each night.
- having a stable family environment is important to building emotional security. Studies have shown that when a child feels emotionally secure in their environment, it allows them to be curious and adventurous in learning.
- considers thinking and learning important, the child adopts that value too. This involves encouraging reading at an early age, providing activities that promote logical and critical thinking, while keeping TV and video games to a minimal.

Parent should also keep in mind that teachers can not do it all. It is their responsibility to get involved in their child's education by providing the material and equipment needed, helping children with their homework and projects, and attending parent teacher's conferences. Maintaining an open honest relationship with your child/children teachers can make a world of difference in your child/children education. "If you need answers, please don't hesitate to send your questions to Sharon.black@med.navy.mil.

School Liaison Officer Contact Information

Mid-Atlantic Regional SLO(757) 322-2679	NWS Yorktown SLO	(757) 887-7757
Naval Station Norfolk/NSA SLO(757) 438-3315	Norfolk Naval Shipyard SLO	(757) 438-3638
NAS Oceana/Dam Neck SLO(757) 433-3976	New London SUBASE SLO	(860) 694-3772
JEB West (Little Creek) SLO(757) 462-4483	PNSY/NAS Brunswick SLO	(207) 438-2466
JEB East (Fort Story) SLO(757) 422-7101 ext. 238	Naval Station Newport SLO	(401) 841-7126

QUOTE TO NOTE

All of us do not have equal talent, but all of us should have an equal opportunity to develop our talent.

-- John F. Kennedy

Education is what survives when what has been learned has been forgotten.

-- B. F. Skinner

Never doubt that a small group of thoughtful, committed citizens can change the world. Indeed, it's the only thing that ever has.

-- Margaret Mead